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Background

- NASA's 50-MHz Doppler Radar Wind Profiler (DRWP) at Kennedy Space Center (KSC).
- Vertically-pointing radar that collects wind profiles every five minutes from near 2-18 km.
- Identifies short-term wind changes.
- Situational awareness asset for launch operations.
- NASA replaced the original instrument in autumn 2014.
- Full certification required prior to acceptance.
- Evaluates DRWP over multiple seasons.
- Time-consuming process.
- Vehicle programs desire to use the DRWP conditionally prior to certification.
- Operational Acceptance Test (OAT)
- Short-term test to assess the new DRWP's data quality against the previous DRWP.
- Verify DRWP data quality for Eastern Range launch support.



Figure 1: View of the new DRWP during installation.

OAT Criteria

Table 1: OAT parameters and criteria.

OAT Test Plan Specifications	
Required Data	Wind Speed and Direction, Altitude, Shear, Radial Velocities, Signal Power, Noise Power, Spectral Width.
Time Interval	5 min
Vertical Data Interval	150 m
Altitude	2-18.6 km
Wind Accuracy	1.5 m/s RMS component difference
Effective Vertical Resolution	500 m

- OAT Test Plan [1] specifies parameters' acceptance criteria.
- Wind accuracy and effective vertical resolution (EVR) criteria are based on [2] and [3].
- Analysis methodology:
 - Required data, time interval, vertical data interval, and altitude: Data examination
 - Wind accuracy: Examine root mean square (RMS) wind component differences between DRWP and balloon data.
 - EVR: Spectral analysis of DRWP wind profiles.

Data

- Automated Meteorological Profiling System (AMPS) balloons.
 - Low-Resolution (LR) and High-Resolution (HR) Flight Element (FE).
 - 30.5-m (100.0 ft) wind component profiles.
- DRWP
 - Winds and radar parameters reported every 150 m (492 ft) from 1798-19465 m (5899-63862 ft) at ~5 minute intervals.
 - Meets the OAT's criteria for required data, time interval, altitude, and vertical data interval.
 - Data collected from 6 Jan 2015 to 19 Feb 2015.
 - Quality control
 - Removed convective periods from DRWP archive.
 - Removed vector shears exceeding 0.15 s^{-1} .
 - A total of 5426 concurrent winds from 49 profiles exist.

DRWP EVR Assessment

- Magnitude Coherence Squared (Coh^2) [3].
 - Quantifies correlation versus wavelength.
 - EVR defined at wavelength where Coh^2 equals 0.25.
- Computed daily mean power and cross spectral density and Coh^2 .
- Sample-weighted mean Coh^2 exceeds 0.25 at all wavelengths.

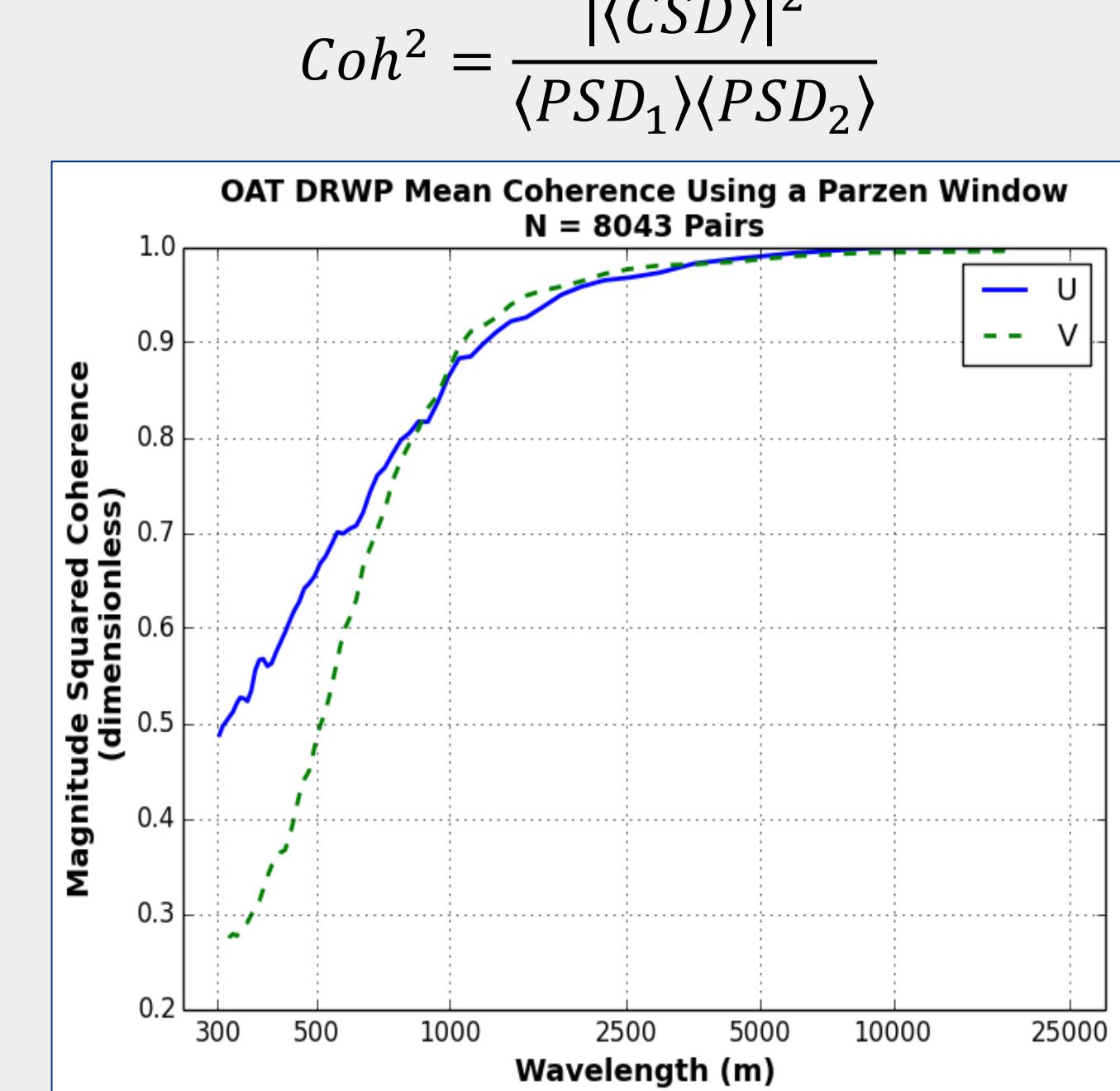


Figure 4: U and V Coh^2 versus wavelength.

DRWP and Balloon Comparison

Preprocessing

- Extracted balloon data at each DRWP altitude.
- Extracted DRWP data at the timestamp corresponding to the balloon's altitude.
- Computed the wind component difference at each altitude.
- Scrutinized cases where vector differences exceeded 15 m/s.

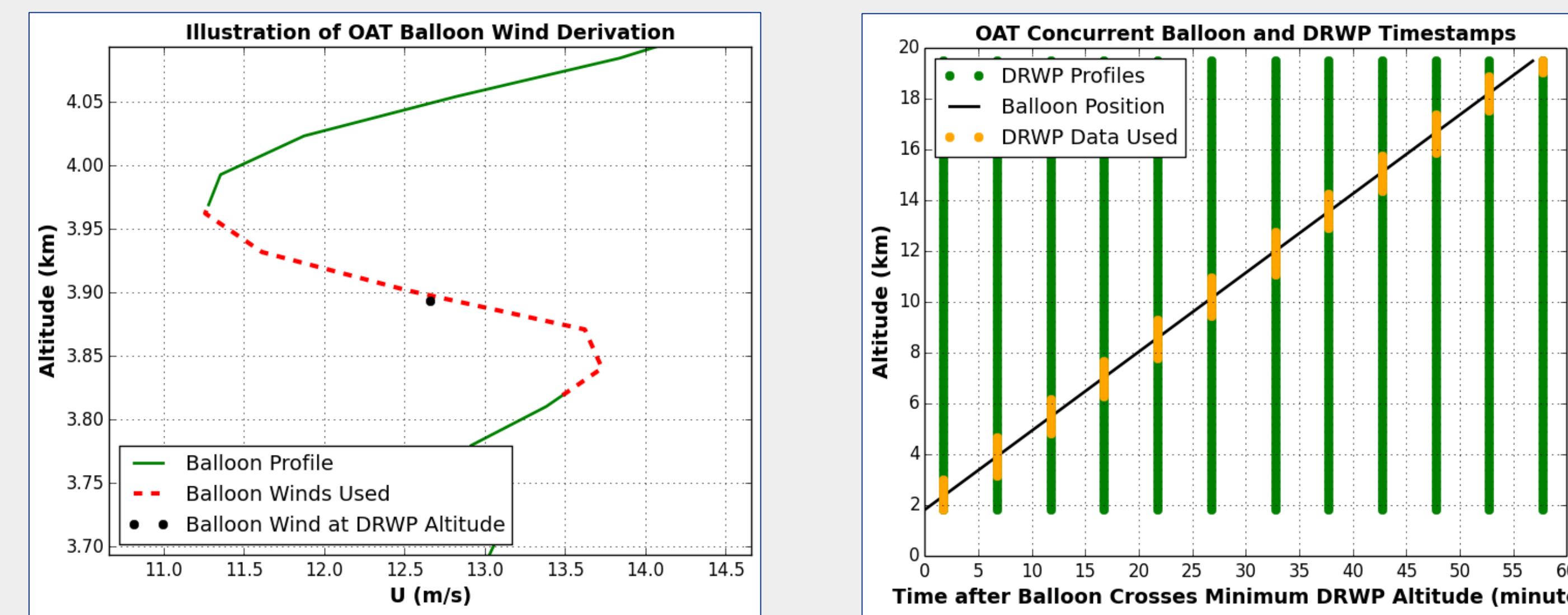


Figure 2: Illustration of OAT balloon (left) and DRWP (right) wind profile derivation.

Results

- RMS $\Delta U = 2.02 \text{ m/s}$ and RMS $\Delta V = 2.14 \text{ m/s}$ exceed criteria.
- Adjustments for system noise changed results by less than 0.03 m/s.
- Balloon drift has significant effect on results.
 - RMS $\Delta U, \Delta V$ below 1.6 m/s, which is near the LRFE error.
 - Sample size artifact at close ranges.

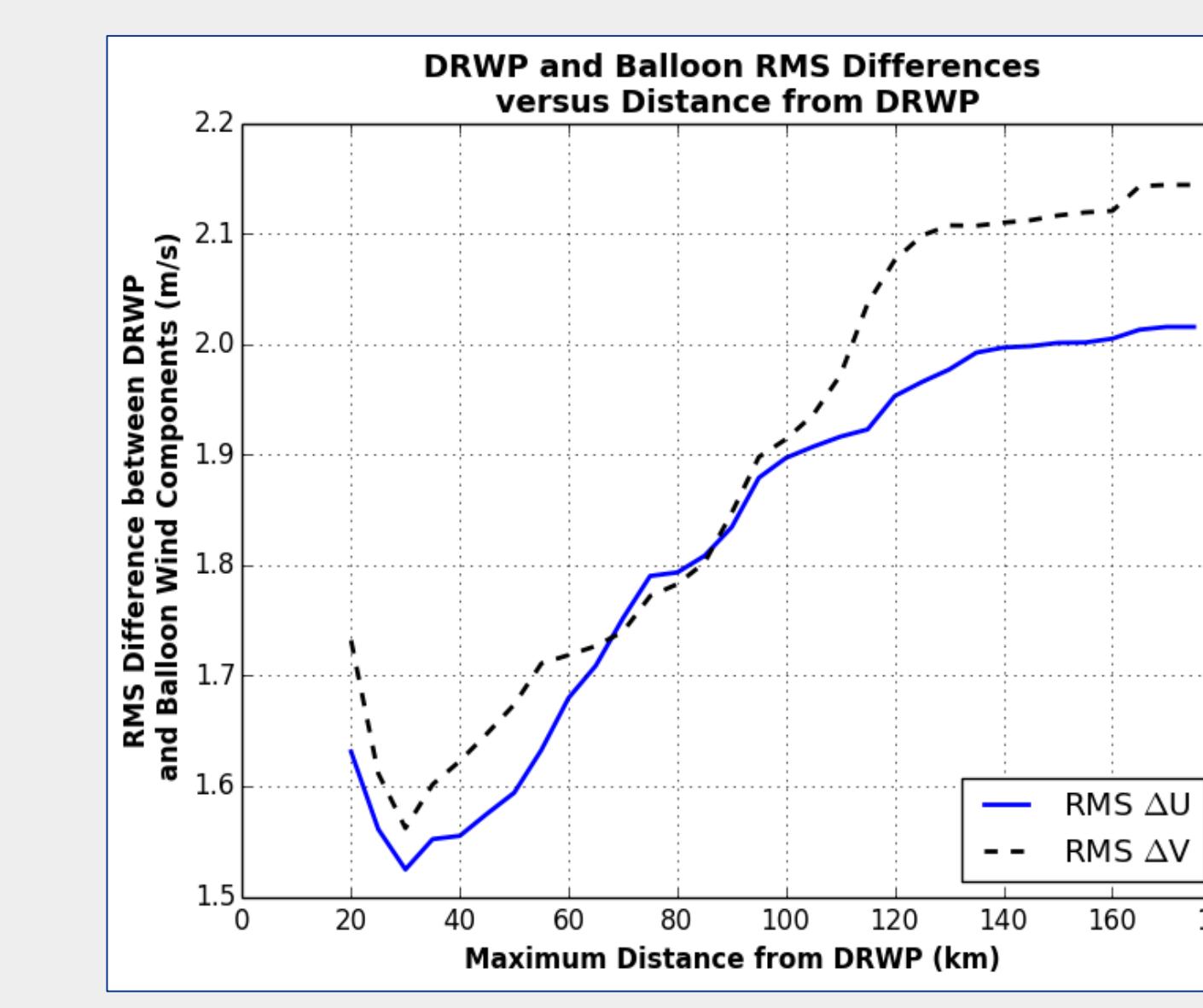


Figure 3: RMS ΔU and ΔV versus balloon's distance from the DRWP.

Vertical Data Coverage Analysis

- DRWP reports a wind at all altitudes.
 - Median Filter First Guess algorithm [4].
 - Implements a first-guess propagation (FGP) if the signal to noise ratio is less than -30 dB.
- Examined FGPs versus altitude for awareness.

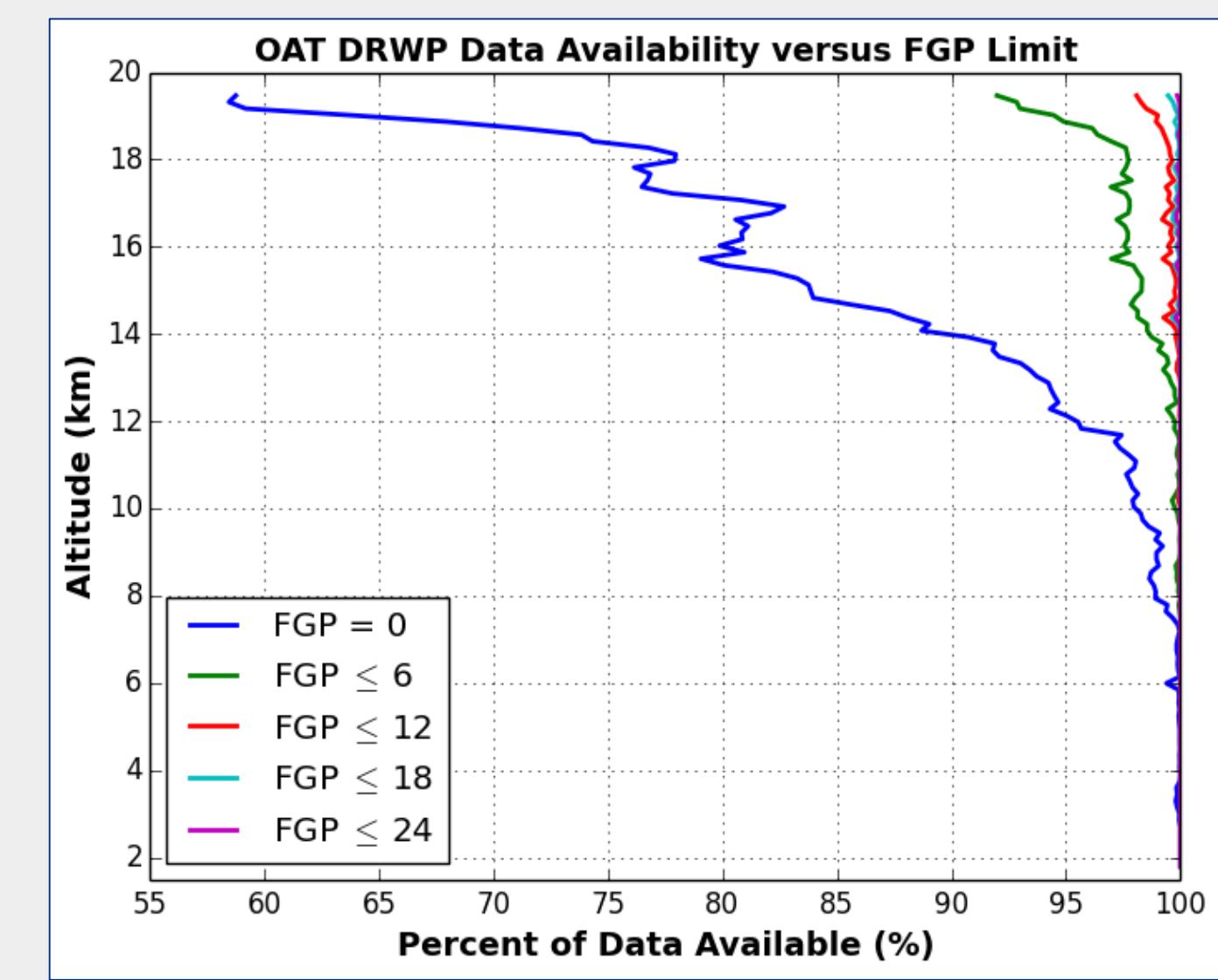


Figure 5: FGP limit versus altitude.

Conclusion

- Results pass all criteria except wind accuracy. However, data is good enough to use for its short-term purpose based on the OAT's intent and through experience.
- Individual vehicle programs decide if and how to use the DRWP.
- Intend to use the OAT methodology for DRWP full certification.

Acknowledgements

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